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**THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ARAB SPRING ON
THE DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS OF MIDDLE
EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (MENA)**

PhD. THESIS

-Summary-

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INTRODUCTION

The present research project starts from the unexpected evolutions registered by the contemporary history in the last 20 years which reinstated on the map of global concerns (at the level of political, economic and military relations, but also at the level of perceptions and public representations) the problematic issue of the Middle East and the accumulated tensions from the area.

These evolutions appeared after almost three decades in which Francis Fukuyama's predictions on "the end of history" seemed to become true considering the transition of regimes from Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union to democracy. The idea of the history end is not new. Hegel saw a similar end with the expansion of the French Revolution beliefs and Karl Max announced the end of history after the total victory of communism which he thought will bring to an end the internal contradictions and class struggle at international level.

In 1989, when the fall of Eastern block was predictable, Fukuyama called on the ideological final of humanity evolution and the universalization of the liberal democracy as form of government. Even if, in the reality, this evolution was not complete (as many countries continued not to be democracies), at ideological level, the Western liberal democratic values had no opponent with a similar conviction power, democracy being seen as the supreme form of governance.

Precisely, this kind of vision over the world based on "democratic peace" and international security seemed to justify ideologically the external intervention of the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty's allies in Serbia, Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya. Although, these interventions are far from being considered successful, especially from the point of view of eliminating local and regional tensions, and even if they led to the discrediting of Western countries in the intervention areas, the export of the democratic model of governance in different cultural-political spaces seemed yet possible and highly desirable.

The need to convey values attributed to the Western culture is best explained in Edward Said's masterpiece "Orientalism", where the author argues on a presumed superiority of the West over the Oriental world due to existing misleading perceptions. This kind of perceptions has materialised in time, in a political instrument of domination, conferring the power for the West to advance its cultural, political and social norms in other areas that may or may not welcome these values. As democracy tends to be considered the most superior form of governance, standards to rank countries based on the liberties and rights granted to people are taken into consideration more

and more often. Freedom House, who assesses the degree of democratization of countries, places on regular basis, at the end of the ranking, the Arab countries as being the less democratic states from the world. Nonetheless, the rank itself is biased and design to accommodate Western values only.

This is the vision of J. L. Esposito that rejects the measures embedded in the reality of the West used to understand the Eastern area. For him, democracy can embrace different shapes based on the context applied, and Islam has already experienced some democratic values. Therefore, democracy should not be exported in the model adopted by the European countries and the United States, but should be adapted to respond also to other cultural values and habits. For this reason, Esposito rejects the idea of “Islam exceptionalism” and welcomes local models of democracy.

In this context, the Arab spring (2011), was seen as a mass phenomenon started by the population against oppressive and abusive regimes. The initial expectations were similar to those emerging from the Central and Eastern Europe waves (‘89-‘91 wave and the Orange revolutions), where the demonstrations lead to the disappearance of the communist/socialist block and its replacement with a democratic one. However, in the case of the Arab spring, almost all the countries experiencing the movement registered results ranging from devastating to insensible effects. The only partial positive effect was recorded by Tunisia that is ranked now as a hybrid democracy. In addition, the range of risks associated with the Arab Spring experienced an unprecedented spectrum of impacts affecting the contemporary world: at global, regional, national and human levels.

The protests and riots triggered by the Arab Spring, especially in Libya and Syria, generated a large number of refugees who moved to Western Europe and neighbourhood countries. Another consequence of the insurgencies from MENA region was the development of the Islamic State and its limited success gained in 2015 and partially 2016, as well as its influence over the region. The terrorist attacks and the ideology promoted by the Islamic States led to the radicalisation of some individuals from the territories of the European Union, the United States and former Soviet republics. Fed by the frustrations caused by non-integration from economic and cultural point of view, citizens of these states become terrorists committing attacks in the European Union and in Arab countries.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

In these conditions, we have separated our thesis targeting to identify the causes for which democratization failed in the region even in the context of an “Arab Spring”, in five main chapters:

- Chapter one offers an overview on the instruments and the methodology used in the development of the thesis.
- Chapter two depicts the theoretical background of the research by scanning different approaches of democratization (S. Huntington, R. Dahl, S. M. Lipset, T. Munroe, D. C. Shin, L. Diamond, F. Fukuyama, T. Carothers, J. L. Esposito) and security (B. Buzan, R. H. Santini) and links the two concepts together for the purpose of this thesis.
- Chapter three presents the development of the events taken place in 2010-2011 adding information on the triggers of the movement, the profile of the demonstrations and protesters, caricatures expressing in imagines the attitudes of people towards their rulers and debates on the deficit of democracy in the area.
- Chapter four provides on overview of the different factors leading to the appearance of the Arab Spring, along with the consequences of this phenomenon. The thesis will focus on the following dimensions:
 - For the **cultural-historical dimension**, we will investigate a potential incompatibility between religion and sectarianism, on one hand, and democracy and security, on the other hand, to understand the factors contributing to the failure of the Arab Spring.
 - The **historical –political** dimension will be covered by the reconstruction of the evolution of Arab states in the modern period, the trigger moment of the regional security complex formation and the development of the authoritarianism regimes across the whole area with the approval and complicity of the Western powers.
 - The **economic dimension** will concentrate on different economic indicators reflecting the pre-Arab Spring situation and how their interaction and side effects produced the proper environment for manifestations.
 - The **military causes** will be investigated in correlation with the Arab Spring, searching for the factors that contribute to certain decisions with political

impact such as the response of the leaders and the positioning of the Western powers towards the Revolution.

- Chapter five focuses on a study case presenting in parallel Syria and Egypt revolutions and their effects in time. Not aimed to copy the general overview of the previous chapter, this part of the thesis will build on very particular aspects related mainly to the two states security apparatus, composition of population, economic drivers and grievances, immediate and long term consequences and prospective for their future.

The research is closed with a set of conclusions reflecting on the premises and hypothesis advanced in the introduction part.

CHAPTER 1: METHODOLOGY

Our doctoral thesis seeks to initiate a multi-level analysis of the Arab Spring phenomenon and its potential causes and impact in terms of democratization of the region and maintenance of the status quo in the security complex, surveying regional, cultural-historical, economic, political and social variables.

The research question established for the present thesis is: Which are the causes for which the Arab Spring phenomenon did not produced the democratization of the countries affected, and by contrary, it generated major crisis and risks at international, regional and human level?

The premise from which we depart in our thesis is that the Arab Spring was not part of a third or fourth wave of democratization or even had the intension to be part of, but it was rather a social-economic movement against the rampant corruption and deterioration of the living conditions in the MENA countries, that ended up destabilising the whole area and transferred the risks beyond the security complex it belong to.

The general objective of the research aims to analyse the local, regional and international context and causes of the Arab Spring for understanding how the security risks associated to this movement appeared and the catastrophic consequences generated.

To operationalize this objective, four specific objectives shall be followed across the thesis:

The specific objective 1: Increasing the understanding on how the cultural and historical context of MENA acted as an inhibitory factor for the advance of democratization in the region.

We are proceeding with a cultural – historical analysis of secondary data in order to define the profound context in which the Arab Spring took place. We are focusing on underlying the importance of this dimension on the overall development of events from 2010-2011 and how culture and history inhibit the transformation of the Revolutions in democracy.

The specific objective 2: Providing a detailed description of the Arab Spring phenomenon at occurrence, political, social and economic levels to depict the chronology of events and acknowledge the factors leading to the emergence of the movement.

Under this objective, we are investigating the internal causes of the Arab Spring, the authorities' response, the degeneration of the situation and the evolution of the phenomenon either

in restoring the status-quo, or degenerating in conflicts. We are focusing here on the load of endogen variables contributing to the explanation of the Revolutionary wave appearance.

The specific objective 3: Exploring the overall impact of the Arab Spring on the MENA regional security complex and how the political, economic and security agenda of the affected countries were influenced by the generated risks.

Our analysis is targeting the regional security complex in an attempt to understand how the security risks used to be mitigated before the eruptions of the demonstrations, and what these risks generated at regional and worldwide level once out of control. Lessons learned from the countries evolving to conflict were adopted by the other countries from the area in their attempt to diminish security risks and maintain stability.

The specific objective 4: Having a close look on the international arena to identify the position of the regional and international actors towards the Arab Spring, trace their involvement in maintaining a stable security environment and their attitude towards democratization of the MENA region.

The last objective brings forward the regional and international stakeholders involved or even passively observing the evolution of events. At regional level, it was of a great importance the regional alliances of the states. For instance, in Bahrain and Yemen, Saudi Arabia supported the ruling families, employing force against civilians to restore the situation, while Syrian regime was intensively supported by Iran and Hezbollah. At international level, North Atlantic Treaty allies or other governments intervene in the local conflicts as Libya, Yemen and Syria.

Contrary to a project management approach, the objectives will not respond each of them to a set of activities/chapters clearly defined but rather they will blend, tracing the overall ideas from the thesis, and building on each other feasible explanations for the occurrence and development of events.

CHAPTER 2: DEMOCRACY AND SECURITY UNDER THE MAGNIFYING GLASS

To be able to build our cases, we have reviewed several democratization theories, to assess from different angles if the region might accommodate democracy, and if the impact of the Arab Spring at political level could induce a transition to democratization.

Since democratization is the process of transforming a state from non-democracy to democracy by upgrading and adapting institutions, policies and values, it was necessary to understand how and if this process can actually be implemented across MENA countries. Most of the work scanned seemed to lead to the conclusion that democracy is the best form of government, allowing people to express their thoughts and fulfil their aspirations, and it should represent the aim of any nation. Nonetheless, democracy should not be seen as a translated model that can be picked from one context and just imposed in another. Democratization is an organic process, implying a lot of modifications that should take place in time, being supported by both elites and masses. Within our thesis, we have presented the third wave of democratization and the cumulus of factors for democratization of Huntington, the multiple paths of democratization and reinvention of democracy of Dahl, the deficit of democracy of Munroe, the problematic relation between Islam and democracy as highlighted by Huntington, the manufactured democratic model of Shin, the democracy consolidation and problems that hamper the instauration of democracy as seen by Diamond, the decline of democracy and clash of civilization of Fukuyama, and the transition model of Carothers. All these theories enclose a deep research work conducted to assess the supremacy of democracy, its viability, dangers and way to move forward to maintain the system. While some references are made regarding the MENA region, in the sense of impediments associated to the area in adopting democracy and “Arab/Islam exceptionalism”, most of the papers reviewed are highly Western-centred, promoting biased ideas and ways of measuring democratization that could only be reached by just few countries.

Several approaches to democratization were discussed:

- the modernization theory (Lipset as representative), whereas democracy is a result of educational, economic and social development experienced by citizens;

- the structural theory (Moore as representative), whereas different power structures, operating in the society at political, social and economic level, and their relations, can either favour democracy, either authoritarianism regimes;
- the transition theory (Rustow as representative), whereas democratization is purely a political process where elites play the main role.

However, none of the theories investigated offers a pertinent explanation for the deficit of democracy from MENA region, as we showed through our research. While some authors, as Huntington, speak about incompatibility between Islam and democracy due to cultural aspects, Esposito and Piscatori pledge for more flexibility in assessing the rigidity of the Islamic religion. As the Judeo-Christian religion adopted democracy in the nineteenth century, previously being supporter of the absolutist monarchy, the same, the Islam can transform itself in a more “democratic” religion. Up to now, democratization could not have represented a priority for the Arab countries since all of them were concentrating on building their state apparatus after years of colonialism.

In our thesis, we come to the conclusion, that the most suitable theory to be used, and that can explain from political point of view the consequences and impact of the Arab Spring, is Carothers’ transition paradigm. According to this theory, the states leaving the spectrum of authoritarian regime are not necessarily set on the democratization path, but rather transition to different forms of governance. Democratization is not a linear process and countries may have many advances and setbacks before embracing a liberal government. As such, some internal processes must take place, and any development aimed at increasing the rights and liberties of citizens should be acknowledged as progress and supported.

To connect democratization with security, another focal element of our thesis, we have presented the benefits of democratic peace theory. Democracy provides the political foundation to sustain all the dimensions of security. The theory of democratic peace is fundamental to explain why the degree of aggressiveness between democratic states is so low compared to other states with different regimes: democracies do not go to war against other democracies, because the decision makers are accountable in front of their citizens and because of the democratic culture itself that determine leaders to settle all disputes in a peaceful way. The assumption of the theory applied to the MENA context is that Arab countries will pacify themselves if a democratic system will be adopted, solving their internal conflicts and tensions in a constructive way.

While debating on the application of the theory on practical cases, we have brought in aspects from the security perspective. The generated threats are the main consequences of the Arab Spring. As such, we must understand the way security influences the constellation of countries from MENA region. The individual, national and regional securities represent all important variables in the pre and aftermaths of 2010-2011 events.

The regional security complexes theory brought in insights from the regional and national politics. To understand these politics, we have gone deep in the three sub-complexes that co-exist in the MENA region: Levant, Gulf and Maghreb. MENA region is one of the most atypical regional structure ever built in the world. While the countries are so depending/influenced by their neighbours and thus regionally embedded in a cluster, all the supranational structures created to aggregate common visions and missions, failed due to nationalism. The amalgam of factors determining the Arab Spring, which are linked to the security complex, can be traced in history, in the way the sub-complexes were formed and how the states interacted, and offer a plausible explanation of why democratization, including Islamic democracy, failed to be embraced in the MENA.

The Arab Spring and its spin over effects have already started to change the security complex from the region. The consequences of the Uprising, still visible even in the present in the conflicts from Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya, are affecting the territorial borders from the region along with the internal patterns of power distribution. As result of the movement, many non-state actors have emerged, claiming governmental power to rule over certain areas.

CHAPTER 3: UNDERSTANDING THE ARAB SPRING AND THE DEMOCRATIZATION DEFICIT

The causes of the Arab Spring phenomenon were influenced by multiple factors, as the historical context, the political development, the economic scarcity, the identity rivalry, so on. Within our thesis, all these variable were analysed to offer a holistic picture over the causes conducting to the succession of riots and/or protests fostered by almost all Arab countries.

Considering the magnitude of the Upheavals, it was difficult for us to conduct an indebt analysis of each country hosting demonstrations. As such, we have focused mainly on countries where protests were as Libya, Egypt, Syria, Yemen, adding from time to time data from other states as Tunisia, Morocco, Bahrein, Jordan, Iraq, to justify or to better exemplify some arguments.

In a study conducted by the World Bank on the causes of the Arab Spring and its aftermath, a profile of the protestors is build. Data collected from the Arab Barometer revealed that the typical demonstrator was a medium class person, male, young, single, educated and coming from urban establishments. Nonetheless, the profiles are differentiating themselves from country to country.

While many protests were organised across MENA, in Syria, Yemen and Egypt, their number was the highest with around 240 such events. In total, during 2011, more than 400 protests and riots were organised, number which decreased to more than half in the following year. The highest “density” of protestors was registered in Syria, Yemen and Libya, countries where the revolutions were transformed in civil wars. Around one third of the population engaged in the revolution in Yemen and Libya, and one quarter in Tunisia and Morocco. Egypt and Palestine had also important percentages (around 10%). Small rate of participation could be observed in Lebanon, Algeria, and Jordan. The number of protests overpassed the number of riots in all countries, but they remained very high in Egypt, Yemen and Tunisia.

Many scholars have hurried to declare the Arab Spring an online revolution due to the role played by new social media in organising the protests. We will not deny that indeed, the socialization networks were an important factor for the mobilization of youth, but a special attention should be focused on what happen behind the scene. Social and psychological triggers, along with economic, political and even external influences, determined and continued to fuel the anger and motivation of participants to the riots. The online environment represented an opportunity for people to express those feelings, oppressed for many years in such restricted countries with no freedom of speech.

However, the way the revolution was led on internet resembled more with a “soft war”, mainly the tool used by Western powers, including United States, for changing a situation. This affirmation can be supported through the rapid pace of internet penetration in the Arab countries and the materials shared on media networks. It is not the internet that triggered the riots but rather it helped canalize people anger and determine them to go on the street. It is actually the response of the governments that infused the revolution.

Overall, we can easily conclude that the Arab Spring was a complex phenomenon, but did not subscribe or had the intention to subscribe to a democratization wave, neither the third or the fourth one, as some enthusiastic scholars have hurried to conclude. This is mainly due to some political, economic, cultural, social and even environmental factors that did not allowed the seeds of democratization to be planted in the Arab soil. We do not wish to transmit the idea within our thesis, that failing to democratize is a bad thing. If people, elites, institutions and systems, are not prepared for the democratization, this might be fatal to them. It is overall better to keep a constant landscape and adopt changes step by step, rather than to destabilize the country with unachievable goals.

CHAPTER 4: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE ARAB SPRING

To understand the behaviours of Arab states, we go back in time, during the time of empires, and trace their evolution of Arab countries. The Capitulations, the disputes on territories of the Great Powers, the colonialization and the Sykes- Picot agreement sealed the faith of these states. The tribal and religious identities of people influenced the consolidation or weakening of the MENA countries with visible effects in present. While claiming their independence, most of these countries become hard to govern due to the mix of ethnicities and religions. People became affiliated to sects and the fight for politics become sectarian. If elections took place, citizens were voting with the party representing their community even if they did not agree with their political agenda. The Western powers encouraged this model as an easy way to rule. On the long term, this model has produced instability and civil wars as the ones taken place in the current times. To exit from the colonial system, and to gain their independence, most of the states appealed to their military power. Similar examples of fight for independence are to be found everywhere across the MENA region starting with the end of the second world war. The fight for independence took place in colonies and not in client states. Coup d'état and keeping the power become recurrent models across the area. No matter if the country was ruled by kings or colonels, those gaining the power, fight to keep it. The ultimate goal of their mission was to secure full control over the political life and implicitly, of the state. Arab leaders come to power through coups and not elections, therefore they kept the powers for themselves, leaving people out of the ruling equation.

Along with the cultural and historical factors, we have presented also political, economic and social factors. The corruption represented a main issue in the Arab countries, both at the level of population and at the decision making level. The phenomenon is a consequence of the political regime in place and of the years living under a neo-patrimonial system.

In addition, in the eve of the Arab Spring, ordinary citizens were experiencing a high level of stress regarding the procurement of food. While at macro level, the MENA states were heading to development, at household level the improvements were limited. The satisfaction regarding the standards of living has sharply decreased before the Arab Spring. Frustrations have emerged related to limited employment opportunities, concerns regarding the capacity of public administration and the quality of the services received along with the endemic corruption.

Although, during 2000-2010, improvements took place at the level of socio-economic statistics and growth per capita, the population from Syria, Palestine, Tunisia, Egypt, Iraq and

Yemen were the unhappiest people from the world. The “unhappy development” paradox was caused by a general sentiment of lack of fairness in resources distribution, low quality of life, high unemployment and inability to get ahead without relations.

The main variables producing the Arab Spring that we have investigated within our thesis existed long time before this wave of revolutions, and did not coalesce between them to the point of triggering a regional movement. Historical facts and data analysed on ten years prior to the Upheavals prove it. By contrary, although the countries from MENA region are very similar in many aspects, pan-Arabism or pan-Islamism stream failed to be accomplish each time when attempted, due to a so called fear of losing/giving away from the power of the dictators. Therefore, it is somehow doubtable, that from the unified spirit of people, the Revolution emerged and covered the whole region. Our assumption within the thesis is that, although there were many shortcomings within the region, there is an external force that push for the movement to take place. The external factor lays in the interests of the Western powers that felt the region is escaping from their influence in the benefit of Russia and China, and act upon their agenda to ensure that MENA states remain neo-colonies and continue to “obey”. To prove this argument, we brought evidence for the failure to democratize the area in the lack of actions from the Western countries that did not pushed for transition towards democracy as it happened in the case of East European countries for example. The existing conflicts taken place across the region, reminiscences of the Arab Spring, are in the benefit of the West as trade with weapons has flourished (bringing incredible revenues), access to oil has been maintained and reinforced, and geo-political advantages are still negotiated and not lost.

Moving forward with our thesis, we have also described the modifications suffered by the security sub-complexes due to the Arab Spring, questioning the existing regional powers and presenting how other regional powers are emerging. The amity-enmity pattern was essential for the development of the Arab Spring and its consequences at national and regional level.

Nonetheless, without having expectation for democratization, the Revolutions failed one by one. Just Tunisia is considered to be a positive outcome of the Upspring, being placed now in the sphere of hybrid democracy. In the case of all the other countries, the result was not as anticipated. Many information on the impact of the Arab Spring were presented within the thesis at economic, political and social levels.

According to the Global State of Democracy 2019, MENA region continues to remain the least democratic part of the world, with most of the countries keeping resilient authoritarian regimes and experiencing very little democratic elements. The freedom in the MENA countries is still very low even after the Arab Spring aiming at liberalising the area. The most prominent consequences of the 2010-2011 events are the three civil wars destabilising the area: Syria, Libya and Yemen.

CHAPTER 5: CASE STUDY: EGYPT AND SYRIA

In order to better understand and explain the phenomena of Arab Spring, two case studies were presented in parallel: Syria and Egypt. These countries have a very long history, both of them being one of the first civilizations on Earth. Due to their old legacy, they develop an important culture with common features. Both countries are sharing a joint past of domination and integration under multiple Empires. Due to the abuses of these Empires, a nationalist sentiment emerged among Arabs against the foreign occupation. Local residents could see how imperial citizens are threatened compared to them and wanted to act upon, by claiming their own country back. On long term, the impact of the protectorates was devastating. In Syria, France played a crucial role in defending and empowering minorities, which further deteriorated the social fabric and the sentiment of unity. The situation was quite different in Egypt where the feeling of cohesion was well developed, emerging even in a frustration towards the British Empire for the way Egyptians were treated. As such, in the case of Syria, the enemy was personalised by the internal groups competing for resources, while in Egypt, the enemy was the foreign power competing with the citizens for resources. The first situation divided the nation, while the second one strengthened it; nonetheless, the both cases were a result of the protectorates and foreign influences.

In addition, these states share a common past of abuses on human rights and freedoms, with a strong security apparatus and with militarised political agenda. The authoritarianism was and still is in place for tenths of years supported by the state of emergency law which limits further the rights of citizens. No opposition is allowed. Due to this political and economic configuration, democratization could not take place. Although, some elements associated to democracy occurred (participation in arranged elections, limited and most of the time disguised political pluralism, acceptance of a veiled criticism of the governance structure in general), the democratization phases could not be accomplished. Even from the perspective of the Islamic Democracy, Syria and Egypt failed.

Both countries were impacted by the demographic boom from the '80s and '90s which led to the appearance of a very large generation of youngsters. Very soon, Syria and Egypt start facing economic and social problems due to their protectionist and welfare measures, sharing a “social contract” with the population and thus bearing at state level, the global market shocks. Due to the demographic boom, the economy would soon be exhausted in keeping this social contract.

The Arab Spring has manifested at great intensity in both countries with youngsters as the main drivers. Moreover, the opposition crystallised fast and took the lead of the protests with the Muslim Brotherhood appearing as a common opposition block in both sides. The main difference regarding the result of the revolutions consisted in the response of the military body and of the demonstrators; in Egypt, the army did not supported Mubarak determining his fall, while in Syria, it held Assad in place; in Egypt, people vowed more for a common vision on their future, while in Syria, the opposition become fragmented searching for power and money and not for people's interests. In Syria, the war gained sectarian appearance as some minorities refused to support the Revolution for various reasons. In the same time, in Egypt, all categories of population got involved in the revolution.

None of the two revolutions produced the expected democratization, failing in different ways: in Egypt, the demonstrations brought authoritarianism back, while in Syria, they produced the failure of state. While there is a glim of hope for Egypt to stabilize at least from economic point of view, there is none for Syria, for the coming years.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

At ten years from the start of the Arab Spring, at 15 years from the Orange revolutions wave, and at nearly 30 years from the fall of the communism block and from the predictions of Fukuyama regarding the end of history, the current world faces major risks at global, regional, national and individual level. However, the overall environment contradicts the optimistic assertions of democracy's supremacy with the last years experiencing a decline in the liberalization. The present situation seems to be better explained by the theory of Samuel Huntington regarding the "clash of civilisations" on the cultural/religious dimension, even if the civilization variable represents just the top of the problem.

The Arab Spring is regarded within our thesis in the broad context of the events occurring in the Middle East, including Afghanistan and Iraq wars prevailing the Revolution, and is analysed at several levels, including security and democratization perspective.

The following elements can be depicted within the thesis:

- The emergence of the Arab Spring considering a constellation of factors tracked across decades for the most representative countries hosting protests.
- The connection between security and democratization in the context of MENA.
- The consequence of the Arab Spring at several levels, supported by exemplification through a case study.
- The position of different stakeholders towards the events taken place during the Arab Spring and the conflicts generated afterwards.
- Prospects for the Arab states to host at least stability and limit the risks produced at regional and international level.

As a conclusion to our thesis, the expected democratization failed to appear in the area because it did not constitute a priority for any of the Arab countries in the post-colonial period. Confronted with many social and economic problems, the countries focused on the state-building process with gaining control over the old administrative apparatus and bureaucracy expansion. In this phase actually, the Arab states started to become dictatorial regimes because they sought to control each aspect of people's life. The regimes gaining the power started fast to develop institutions and practices to make them invulnerable to change or "coup proofing". In this case, the voice and action of people could not determine their change, even if leaders were replaced. Nonetheless, their legacy continued to exist through other dictators.

The Arab Spring should serve all of us a lesson about destabilization, human suffering and responsibility to act for prevention. By studying the behaviour of dictators, and actual needs of the population, interventions can be proposed to enhance people's political participation, social justice, more equal distribution and access to economic resources, and social cohesion. Rather than playing in its own interest, the international community should focus on the connectors and dividers from each society and build meaningful and positive interactions among people and between people and authorities to liberalize the country and allow human rights and freedoms to thrive.

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